

SINS of the CHILD • Part 5 of 5



16 \$2.25 US  
\$3.25 CAN  
FEB 96


# STARMAN



ROBINSON  
HARRIS  
VON GRAWBUDGER







IT WAS A  
GOOD DAY.

AT LEAST WHEN  
IT STARTED.

BUT THE STARTING  
CAME AND WENT,  
AS DID 12:00 PM  
WHEN IT WAS "ALL  
GOING TO CHANGE."

AND CHANGE IT  
DID, FOR EVERYONE.  
AND FOR JACK.

NOW...

...AND NOW...  
EVERYTHING IS  
BEDLAM  
DIRE AND  
BRIMSTONE  
DANK.

JACK CAN FEEL A  
BEAD OF SWEAT  
RUNNING DOWN THE  
CLEFT OF HIS  
SHOULDER BLADES.  
IN SPITE OF HIS  
DILEMMA, HE'S  
DISTRACTED BY THE  
PEARL-DROP'S  
LAZY DESCENT.

IT'S 10:03 PM.

TWO DAYS  
FROM NOW--

# Jack's Day (the second half) Sins of the Child, part five

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JACK WILL LOOK  
BACK ON WHAT  
HE DID.

HE'LL REALIZE THIS WAS  
SOME KIND OF TURNING  
POINT IN HIS LIFE.

JACK WILL  
LOOK BACK.

LOOK BACK AT  
WHAT HE DID.

AND NOT REMEMBER  
VERY MUCH THE DOING  
OF IT.

--JACK WILL LOOK BACK  
ON WHAT HE DID. COR-  
NERED LIKE A BADGER.  
WITH NO HOPE. WITH A  
FATHER WHO MIGHT BE  
DEAD OR DYING.


PEOPLE TALK OF DEATH AND  
HAVING OUT-OF-BODY  
EXPERIENCES. YEAH, I'M IN  
DANGER OF DYING, BUT MY  
HEART STILL BEATS, MY BODY  
STILL ACHES WITH PAIN  
AND LIFE.

LIFE.

I LIVE.

AND  
YET I'M  
OUTSIDE  
OF IT  
ALL





I'M LOOKING ON AT JACK KNIGHT. ME. USING WHATEVER I CAN GRAB TO HURT THESE MEN... MEN WHO WOULD HURT ME.

AND THEY DO. I'M NOT WITHOUT SOME KNOCKS. I CRACK A RIB. I PULL MUSCLES IN MY LEG AND ONE OF MY ARMS. THE BLOOD FROM MY EARLIER WOUND FEELS STICKY AND WARM IN A SAD, BAD WAY.

BUT I AM BEYOND AND AWAY. LOOKING ON. FLOATING ON LILAC AND SAFFRON. DRIFTING.

BLOOD SMELLS.

ENOUGH OF IT FLOWS, AND I TELL YOU, COWBOY, BLOOD SMELLS REAL STRONG.

NOT LIKE THE SMELL IN A BUTCHER'S. THAT'S MEAT AND IT'S COLD AND MOST OF THE BLOOD GONE OUT OF IT BY THEN.

NO. WARM BLOOD SMELLS LIKE NOTHING ELSE.



EXCEPT MAYBE RED WINE, FUNNILY ENOUGH. NOT MUCH, BUT THERE'S THAT SAME BITE TO BOTH AROMAS. THE STRONG IRON CONTENT IN THEM, MAYBE. MAYBE NOT, THOUGH. I DUNNO. I'M NOT A CHEMIST OR A DOCTOR SO I DUNNO.

BUT I SMELL BLOOD AND I FEEL FLESH AS I HIT AND KICK AND CUT AND HURT. ONE OF THE MIST'S GOONS HAS THE COARSEST STUBBLE. I PUNCH HIM A GLANCING BLOW, AND IT TAKES SOME OF THE SKIN FROM MY KNUCKLES.

MY POINT BEING, THAT I'M IN THE FIGHT OF MY LIFE.

YET I'M OFF IN THE LILAC AND SAFFRON... THE ROSEMARY ICE CREAM CLOUDS. AND MY HEAD IS FULL OF PLASTIC.

THE FIGHT MAYBE... IT MAKES ME THINK OF "RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK." DON'T ASK ME WHY.

THAT MAKES ME THINK OF THE WAREHOUSE WITH ALL THE CRATES, AT THE END OF THE MOVIE.

AND THAT MAKES ME THINK IN TURN TO LAST WEEK AND THE "PHILCO FIND" I STUMBLED ACROSS.



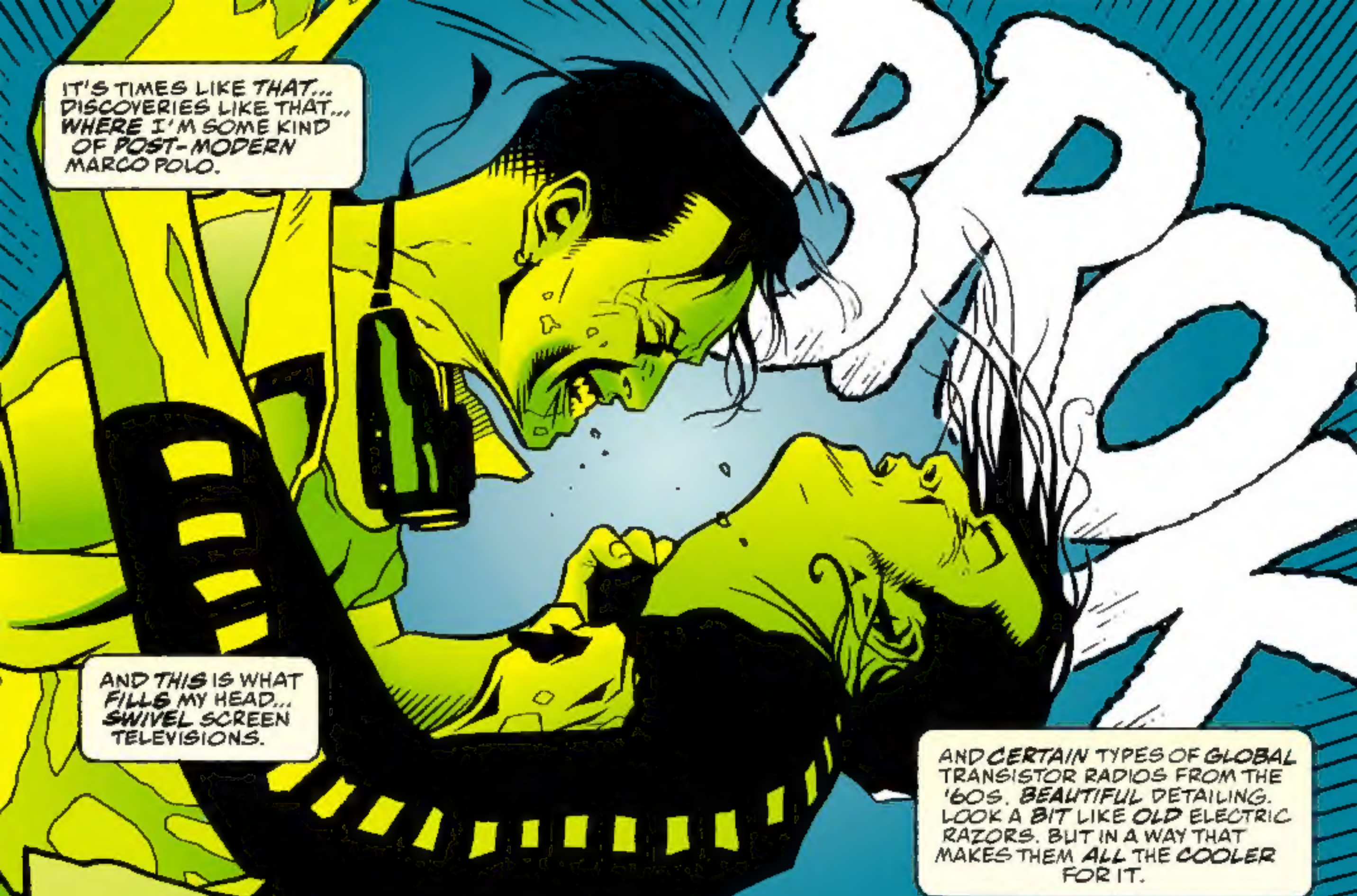
THE PHILCO PREDICTA TELEVISION IS THE COOLEST THING MONO-CHROME EVER HAD GOING FOR IT. SWIVEL SCREEN. TWO-TONE PLASTIC ENCASUREMENT FOR THE SCREEN AND TUBE. BRASS AND WOOD FOR THE BASE, WHERE THE AMP'S HOUSED. DESIGNED IN THAT '50S POST DECO STREAMLINED WAY I LOVE SO.

ALWAYS WANTED ONE. FOUND ONE ONCE WITH A BROKEN TUBE AND ONE OF THE KNOBS MISSING, SO I SOLD IT TO A JAPANESE STUDENT (DON'T KNOW WHY THE JAPANESE LOVE THOSE OLD TVS, BUT THEY DO.). SO I STILL DIDN'T HAVE ONE FOR MYSELF...

...UNTIL  
LAST  
WEEK.

LAST WEEK, I CHECK OUT A WAREHOUSE IN EAST TURK COUNTY, NEAR THE OLD AIRFIELD. PHILCO HEAVEN. THIRTY. ALL IN THEIR BOXES (THOUGH THE BOXES WERE WATER DAMAGED, WHICH IS A PITY). BUT THE TVS WERE FINE, AND I CAN SELL HALF THE STOCK TO DEALERS IN OTHER STATES. KEEP THE REST IN STORAGE, SO I DON'T GLUT MY OWN MARKET.






IT'S TIMES LIKE THAT...  
DISCOVERIES LIKE THAT...  
WHERE I'M SOME KIND  
OF POST-MODERN  
MARCO POLO.


AND THIS IS WHAT  
FILLS MY HEAD...  
SWIVEL SCREEN  
TELEVISIONS.

AND CERTAIN TYPES OF GLOBAL  
TRANSISTOR RADIOS FROM THE  
'60S. BEAUTIFUL DETAILING.  
LOOK A BIT LIKE OLD ELECTRIC  
RAZORS. BUT IN A WAY THAT  
MAKES THEM ALL THE COOLER  
FOR IT.



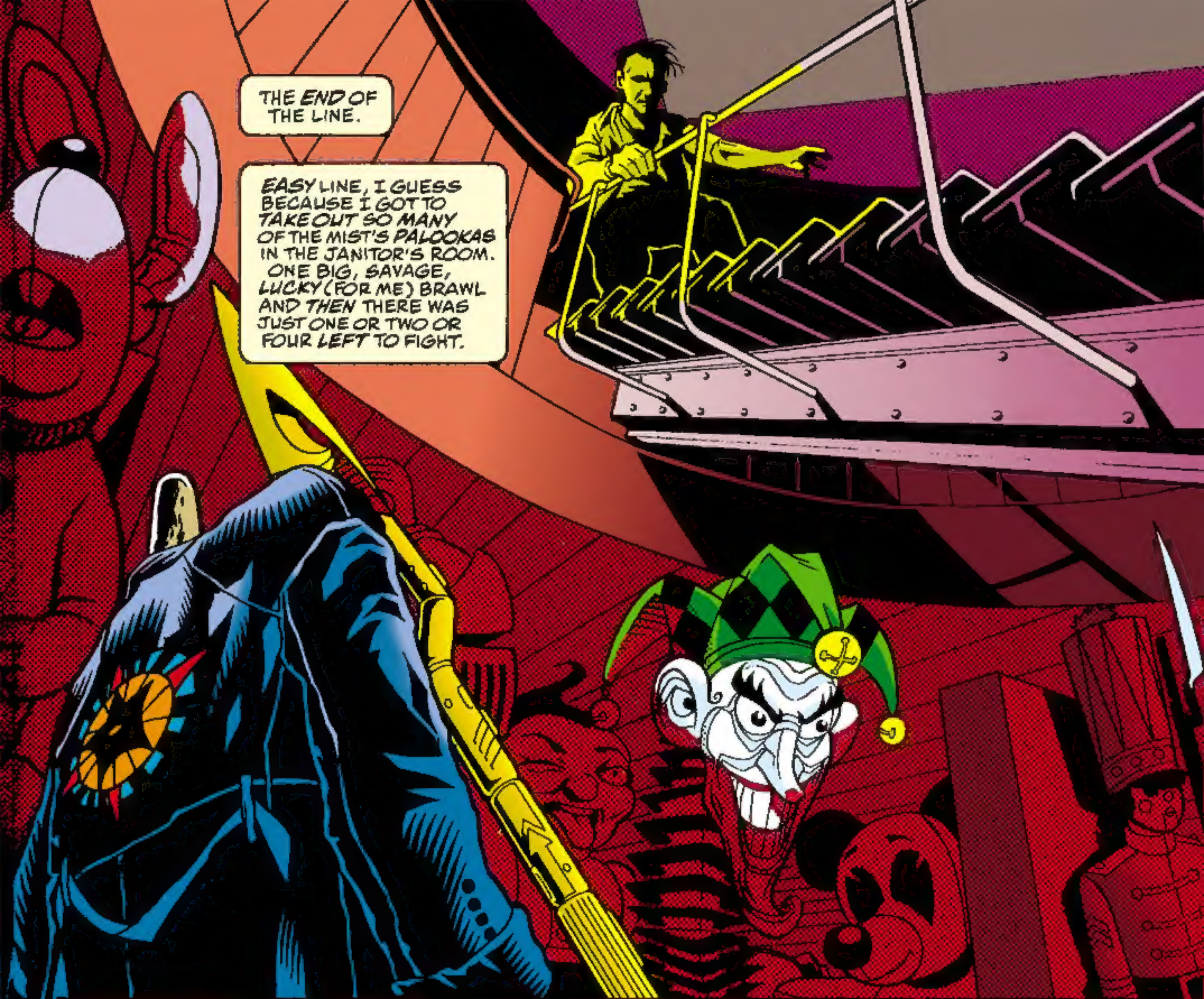
THAT, TOO. IT  
SWIMS AROUND  
WITH ROBERT  
TAYLOR AND  
EDDIE RICKEN-  
BACKER AND  
DIAN BELMONT.

STUFF I SELL. STUFF  
I COLLECT. FAMOUS  
PEOPLE I ADMIRE.



AND THEN, I  
REALIZE  
WHERE I AM.



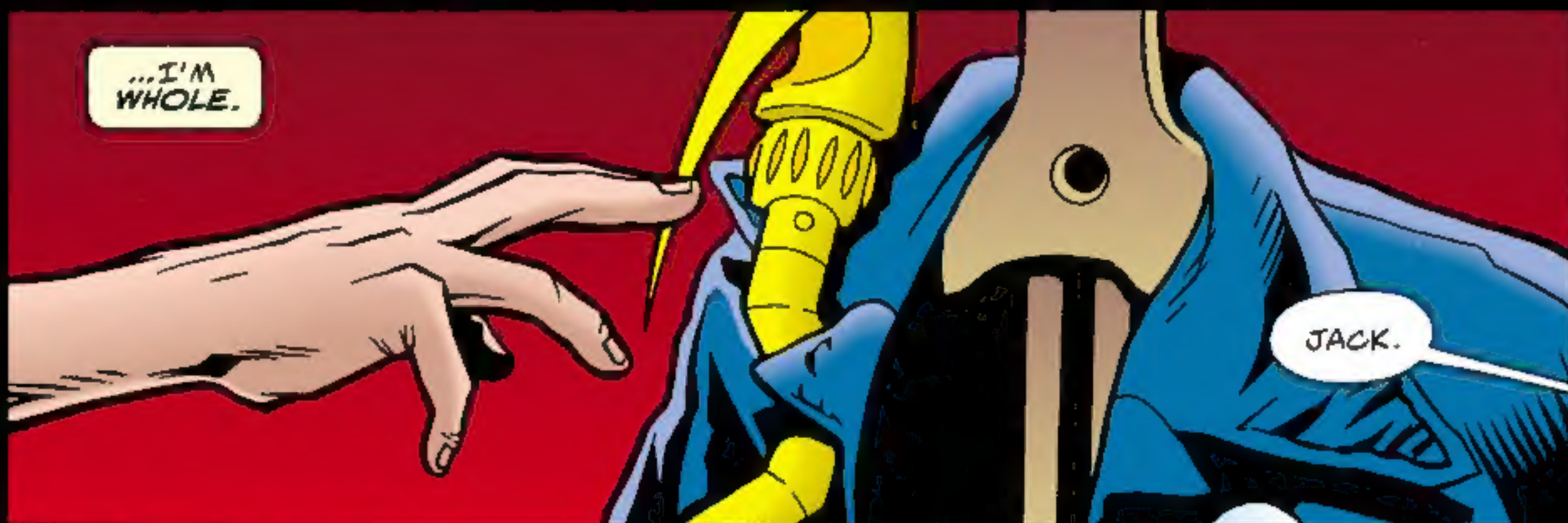


THE END OF  
THE LINE.

EASY LINE, I GUESS  
BECAUSE I GOT TO  
TAKE OUT SO MANY  
OF THE MIST'S PALOOKAS  
IN THE JANITOR'S ROOM.  
ONE BIG, SAVAGE,  
LUCKY (FOR ME) BRAWL  
AND THEN THERE WAS  
JUST ONE OR TWO OR  
FOUR LEFT TO FIGHT.



YEAH, I'M DONE.  
GET OUT OF HERE  
AND BACK TO DAD.  
JUST PUT ON MY  
JACKET, FIRE UP  
MY ROD AND THEN...



...I'M  
WHOLE.

JACK.





DO YOU  
THINK I'D  
STAND BY MY  
PROMISE? I  
MEAN, COME  
ON. I'M THE  
BAD GUY...  
GIRL.

DURRH.  
BAD GIRLS  
LIE.

OH,  
JACK.

DO YOU  
THINK... DO  
YOU... DID YOU  
POSSIBLY  
THINK...

...I  
WOULDN'T  
BE WAITING  
HERE FOR  
YOU?



SO I GO  
THROUGH ALL THIS  
AND YOU KILL ME  
ANYWAY?

BUMMER,  
HUH?



NO, NOT  
THIS TIME.  
THIS TIME  
I LET YOU  
GO.





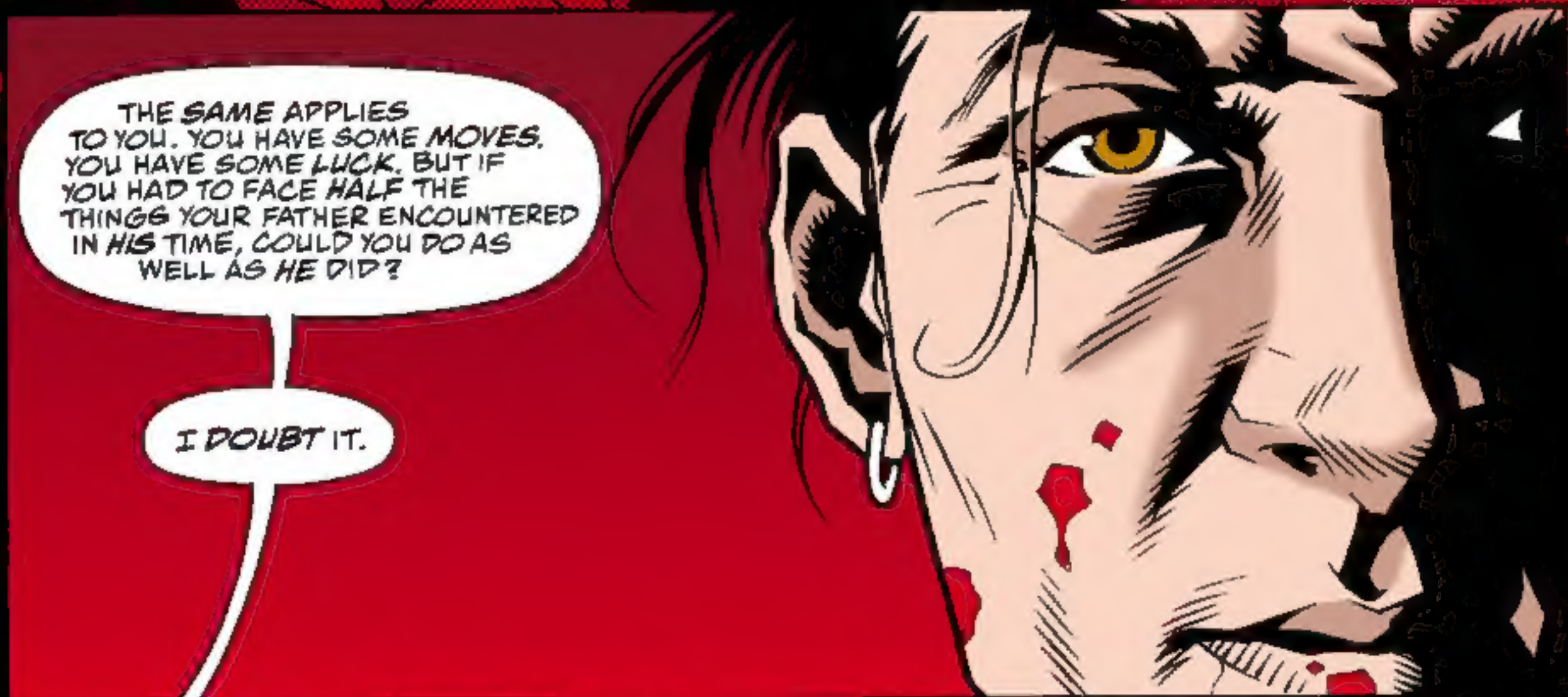


LET  
ME GO?  
I DON'T  
GET  
YOU.

THIS IS  
HOW I SEE  
THINGS.

MAYBE  
YOU NEVER  
WILL, MY  
LOVE.

I'M NOT THE MIST.  
NOT YET. I STILL HAVE  
THINGS TO LEARN...SKILLS  
TO PERFECT. IT MIGHT  
ONLY TAKE ME A WEEK...  
OR A MONTH UNTIL I FEEL I  
AM TRULY THE VILLAIN I  
WANT TO BE. IT MIGHT  
TAKE DECADES.



THE SAME APPLIES  
TO YOU. YOU HAVE SOME MOVES.  
YOU HAVE SOME LUCK. BUT IF  
YOU HAD TO FACE HALF THE  
THINGS YOUR FATHER ENCOUNTERED  
IN HIS TIME, COULD YOU DO AS  
WELL AS HE DID?

I DOUBT IT.



WHAT DO I CARE  
ABOUT ANY OF THAT?  
MY FATHER--! A VOICE  
ON THE PHONE TOLD ME  
HE'S DEAD! IF YOU'VE--

WHOA. COOL YOUR  
JETS. THAT VOICE... DR.  
PHOSPHORUS... WAS PRE-  
MATURE. YOUR FATHER OUT-  
WITTED HIM. THEY'RE PRE-  
PARING A SPECIAL HOLDING  
CELL FOR PHOSPHORUS  
AS WE SPEAK.



HAPPY?  
RELIEVED?

WHAT  
DO YOU  
THINK?





SO...

...WHERE WERE WE?

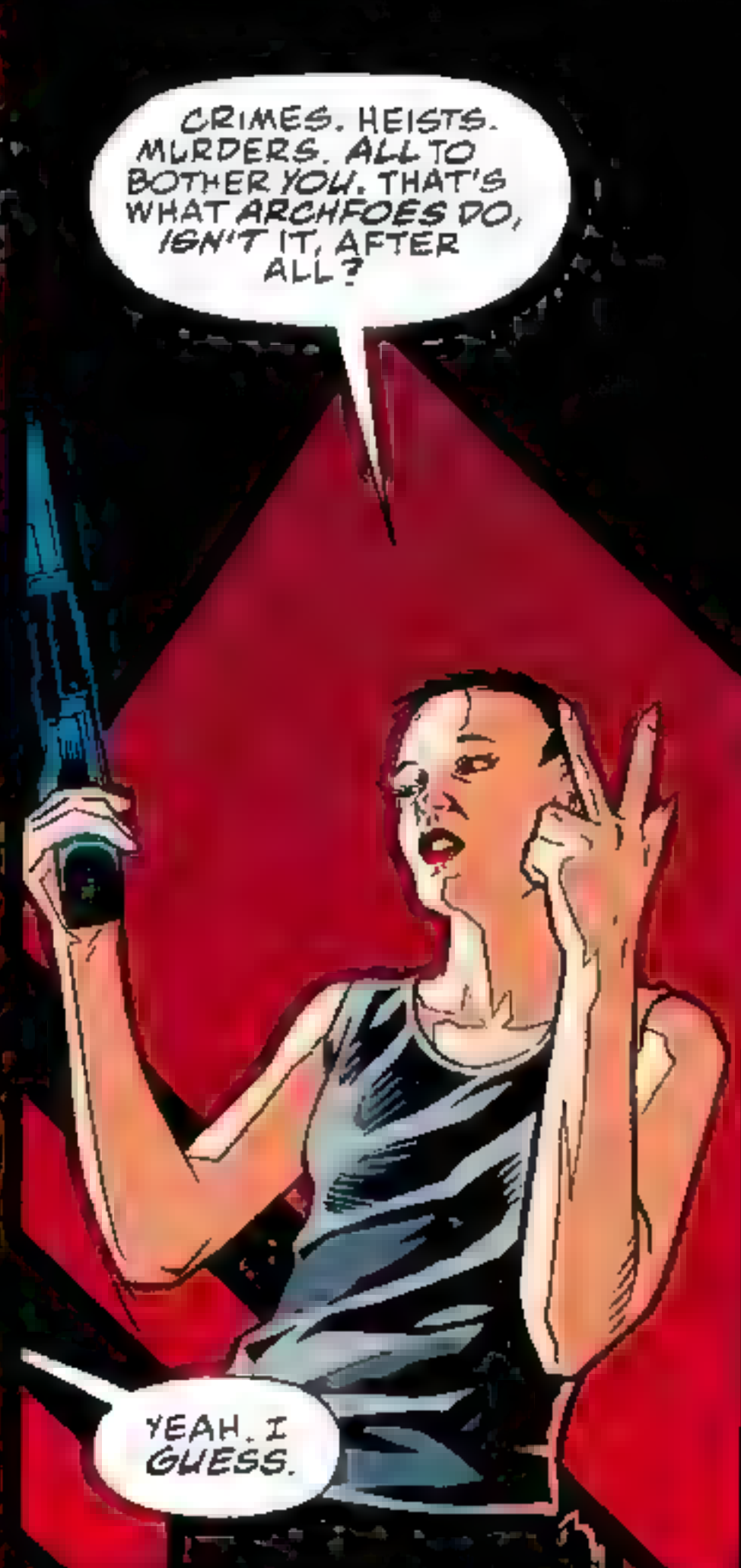
YEAH.

OH, YEAH.



SO WHAT I INTEND TO DO, WHILE WE'RE BOTH EMBRYONIC... IN YOUR HEROISM AND MY VILLAINY, IS TO STICK AROUND.

MESS WITH YOU.



CRIMES. HEISTS. MURDERS. ALL TO BOTHER YOU. THAT'S WHAT ARCHFOES DO, ISN'T IT, AFTER ALL?

YEAH. I GUESS.



BUT WHAT ABOUT MY DAD? HE'S... IT'S NOT FAIR TO HIM. HE DIDN'T ASK FOR YOUR FATHER'S LAST ASSAULT... WHEN MY BROTHER DIED. HE DOESN'T DESERVE ANY OF IT.

THIS IS BETWEEN YOU AND ME. ALL I ASK IS THAT YOU DON'T INVOLVE MY DAD.



ALL RIGHT. GIVE ME AS GOOD AS YOU GET. WORK AT BECOMING THE ONE, TRUE, BEST STARMAN, AS I AM WORKING AT BECOMING THE ONE TRUE MIST.

YOU DO THAT, AND I'LL LEAVE YOUR FATHER IN PEACE.



TO BE HONEST, I HAVE NO HEART IN KILLING YOUR DAD. PHOSPHORUS'S ATTACK... WAS ONE LAST STRIKE IN MEMORY OF MY FATHER. BUT I COULDN'T BEAR THE THOUGHT OF DOING IT MYSELF, WHICH IS WHY I BROUGHT THAT VILLAIN IN.

"NO, YOUR FATHER AND MINE... THEIR TIME HAS PASSED. NOW IT'S YOU AND ME, JACK. MEETING IN BATTLE. GROWING. IMPROVING. BECOMING OUR DESTINIES.

DO YOU KNOW WHO I SEE US BEING LIKE?

I'M ALMOST AFRAID TO GUESS. IF YOU SAY HENRY MILLER AND ANAIS NIN, I HAVE NO COMEBACK.

YET YOUR DAD SURVIVED, AND AS A RECOGNITION OF THAT, EVEN I FEEL THAT PERHAPS HE DESERVES THE REST OF HIS LIFE UNTROUBLED.

"AND I KNOW YOU LIKE ME TROUBLING YOU. DON'T YOU? I CAN SEE IT IN YOUR EYES."

JACK, I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU JUST SAID.

ANYWAY, THAT ISN'T IT. NO, I SEE US AS CARY GRANT AND KATHARINE HEPBURN IN "BRINGING UP BABY." I'M LIKE HEPBURN. I'M MAKING A NUISANCE OF MYSELF, AND DISRUPTING YOUR CALM EXISTENCE. AND YOU TRY TO PREVENT IT, JUST LIKE GRANT DID IN THE MOVIE. BUT YOU KNOW HE SECRETLY CARED FOR HEPBURN ALL ALONG AND WANTED HER TO KEEP BOTHERING HIM.

JUST LIKE YOU DO.

YOU MUST HAVE A RECENTLY UNEARTHED DIRECTOR'S CUT, BABE.

I RECALL THERE WAS A LEOPARD. AND GRANT SPENT SOME TIME RUNNING AROUND IN A WOMAN'S BATHROBE, WHICH I MUST ADMIT I'VE BEEN KNOWN TO DO MYSELF ON THE ODD FULL MOON...

...BUT NOWHERE DID I SEE KATIE HEPBURN KILLING PEOPLE AND ROBBING BANKS.



BUT, ANYWAY...  
LET'S JUST SAY YOU'RE  
RIGHT. WHAT HAPPENS  
IN THE FUTURE? WHAT  
THEN? MAÑANA? WHEN  
WE'VE "BECOME"?

IT DOESN'T  
HAVE TO BE LIKE  
THIS, NASH. YOU'RE  
NOT WELL. I CAN  
TAKE YOU WHERE  
PEOPLE WILL...  
LOOK AFTER  
YOU.

YOU CAN  
CHANGE.  
IT'S NOT TOO  
LATE.

GRUNDY  
AND  
MICHAEL?

THEY WERE IN  
THE CHANDLER  
BUILDING BLAST.  
BUT THE EXPLOSION  
WASN'T MY DOING.  
AND I CAN'T TELL  
YOU IF THEY'RE  
ALIVE OR DEAD.

WHEN  
YOU ARE  
STARMAN.  
TRULY  
STARMAN.

I'LL  
COME  
FOR YOU,  
MY LOVE.  
I'LL KILL  
YOU.

MY NAME'S MIST  
NOW, JACK. I'VE TOLD  
YOU THAT. AND YES, IT  
IS MUCH TOO LATE.

WHY? ALL  
OF IT? THE  
KILLINGS?  
THE  
CRIMES?

I KILLED SIX  
PEOPLE TONIGHT.  
NOT TO MENTION  
PAYING FOR THE ATTACK  
ON YOUR FATHER  
WHICH WOULD HAVE  
BEEN A SEVENTH  
DEATH, IF TED KNIGHT  
DIDN'T STILL HAVE  
THE STUFF OF  
HEROES.

THE ORCHESTRATED  
ROBBERIES? I DID THOSE FOR  
TWO REASONS. ONE, MONEY.  
PURE AND SIMPLE. IF I'M GOING  
TO DO THIS SUPER-VILLAIN THING  
RIGHT, I NEED FUNDING. AND THE  
LAST I HEARD, SONY WASN'T  
SPONSORING MY KIND  
OF EVENT.

SECONDLY, TO SEE IF  
I COULD. MY FATHER ORCHES-  
TRATED CRIME WAVES LIKE  
THIS, FIVE OR SIX TIMES IN  
HIS CAREER.

AND THEY SEEM  
TO HAPPEN WEEKLY  
IN GOTHAM AND  
METROPOLIS.

I THOUGHT  
I SHOULD DO  
ONE. PUT MY  
TOE IN THE  
WATER, SO TO  
SPEAK.

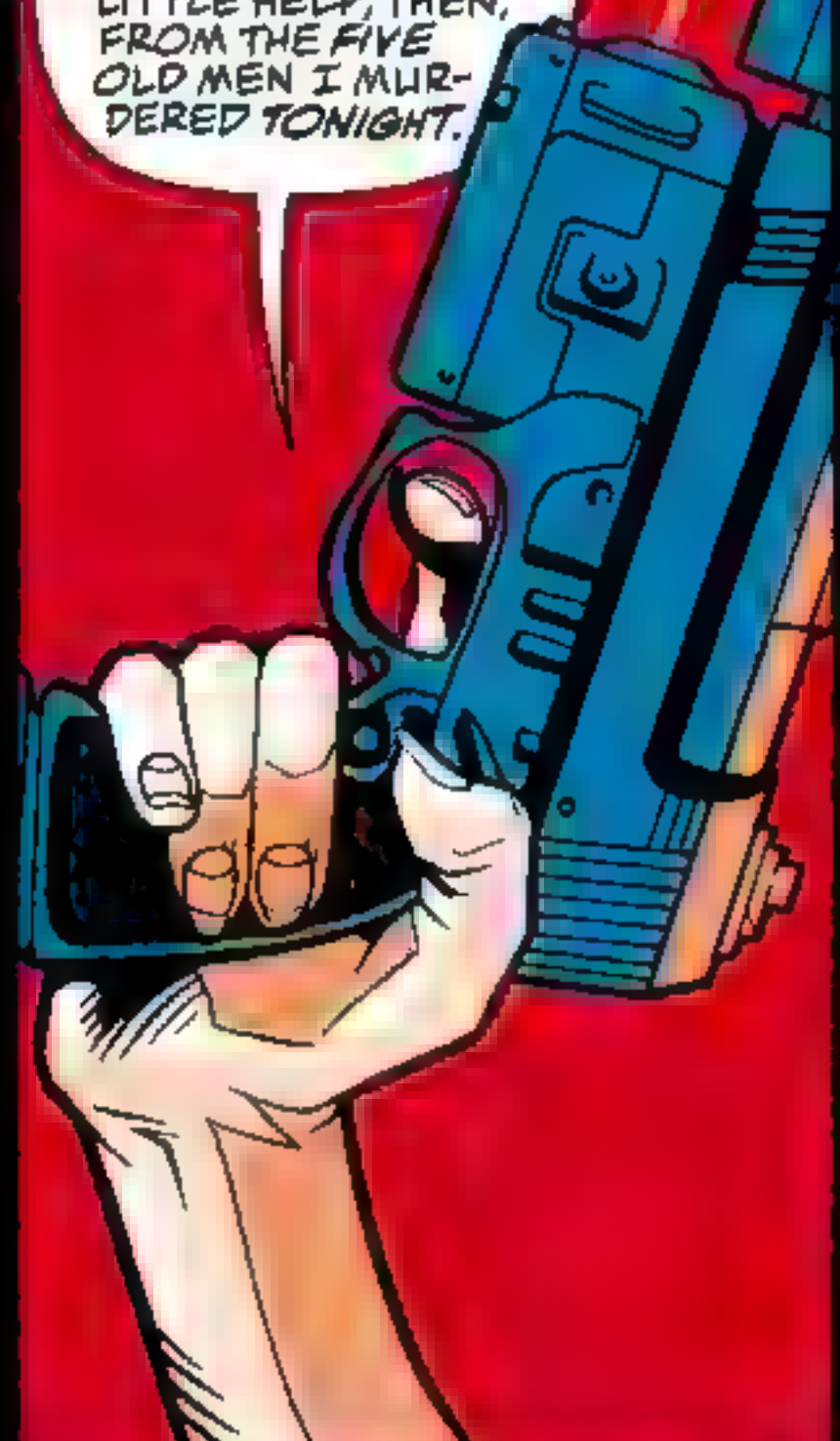


THE KILLINGS, HOWEVER, WERE A DIFFERENT MATTER. THAT WAS AN OLD SCORE I WAS TRYING TO SETTLE.

THE FIRST TIME OUR FATHERS MET, TED KNIGHT WON. HE HAD HELP... A LITTLE HELP, THEN, FROM THE FIVE OLD MEN I MURDERED TONIGHT.

YOU KILLED THEM FOR SOMETHING FIFTY YEARS AGO? SEVERE.

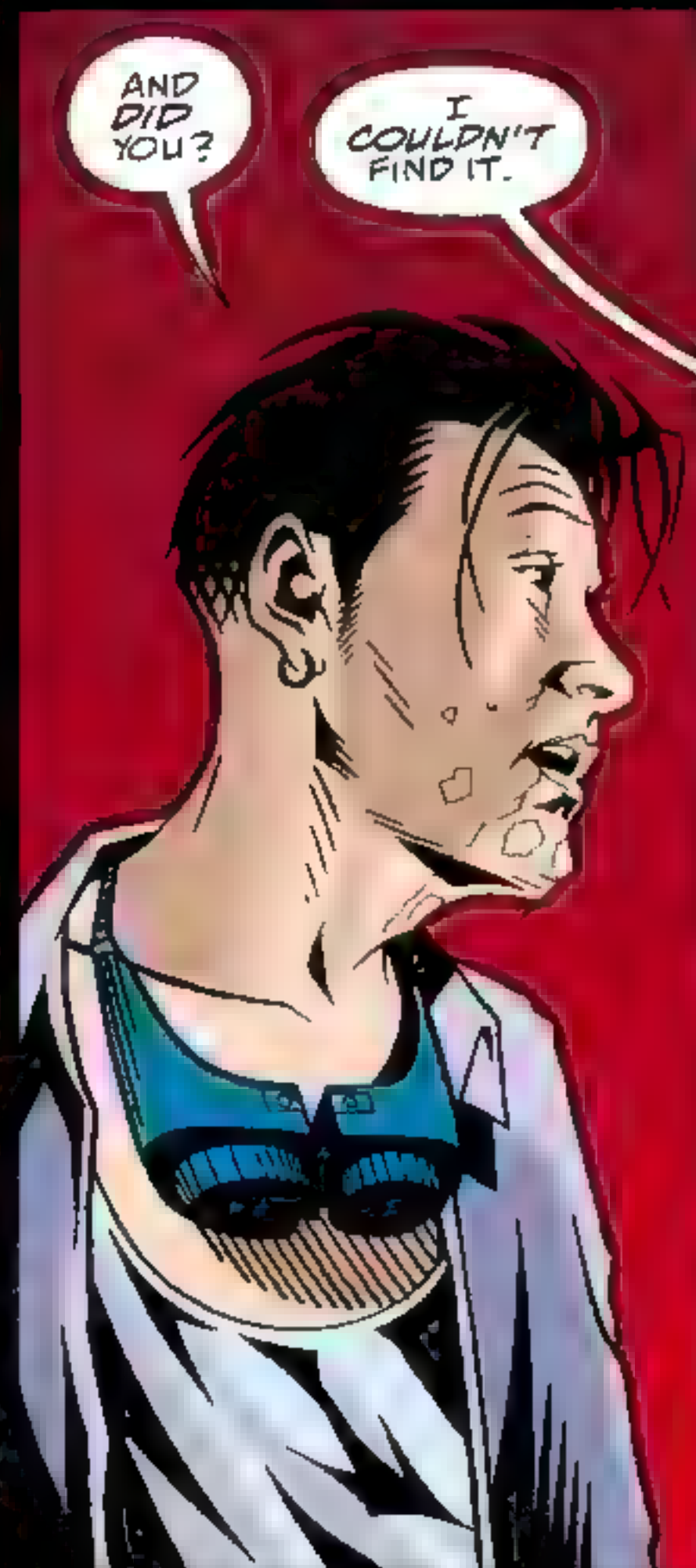
I WOULDN'T HAVE BOTHERED, BUT AFTER YOUR FATHER WON, HE UNCOVERED MY FATHER'S SCIENTIFIC LAIR. A LITTLE AFTER THAT HE SHOWED THE FIVE MEN THIS LAIR AS A COURTESY.



MY FATHER WAS IN THE GREAT WAR. HE WON A MEDAL. ONE OF THE FEW THINGS HE PRIZED. MY FATHER TOLD ME THAT DURING HIS FIRST EXPLOIT, ONE OF THOSE WHO DEFEATED HIM TOOK THE MEDAL. HE WAS VAGUE ABOUT THE DETAILS, BUT I'M ASSUMING THAT WHOEVER TOOK THE MEDAL HAD TO BE ONE OF THOSE MEN.



I WANT TO RETURN THE MEDAL TO MY FATHER. HE CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT DAY OF THE WEEK IT IS, BUT HE RECALLS THE WAR YEARS WITH A VIVIDNESS. THE OLD PAST IS ALL HE HAS NOW. I WANTED TO RETURN A LITTLE OF THAT TO HIM.



AND DID YOU?

I COULDN'T FIND IT.



WHAT ABOUT  
MY FATHER? DIDN'T  
HE HAVE IT?

I SEARCHED BOTH HIS  
OBSERVATORIES LAST YEAR  
BEFORE PLANTING THE EXPLO-  
SIVES AT THE ONE IN TOWN. NO,  
HE DOESN'T HAVE IT.

SO AT LEAST  
IN TERMS OF THAT  
PART OF THE DAY'S  
EVENTS...

...I FAILED.

SO YOU'VE  
EXPLAINED EVERY-  
THING, MORE OR  
LESS.

NOW YOU  
VANISH TO REENTER  
MY LIFE WHEN YOU  
NEXT FEEL  
INCLINED?

BINGO.

YOU'LL NEVER BE FREE OF ME,  
JACK. WE'RE ONE AND THE SAME,  
YOU AND I. THE SHADE OF MORAL  
VENEER THAT COATS US MAY  
DIFFER, BUT THE WOOD BENEATH  
IS IDENTICAL.

WE'RE NOT THE SAME.

YES WE ARE. LOOK  
HARD AT YOURSELF.  
LOOK INTO THE SOUL  
OF EVERYTHING  
YOU'RE BECOMING...

WE'RE THE CHILDREN OF  
THE SUPER-POWERED CRAZINESS  
THAT INFESTS THE PLANET. AND  
WE ARE DESTINED TO  
PERPETUATE IT.

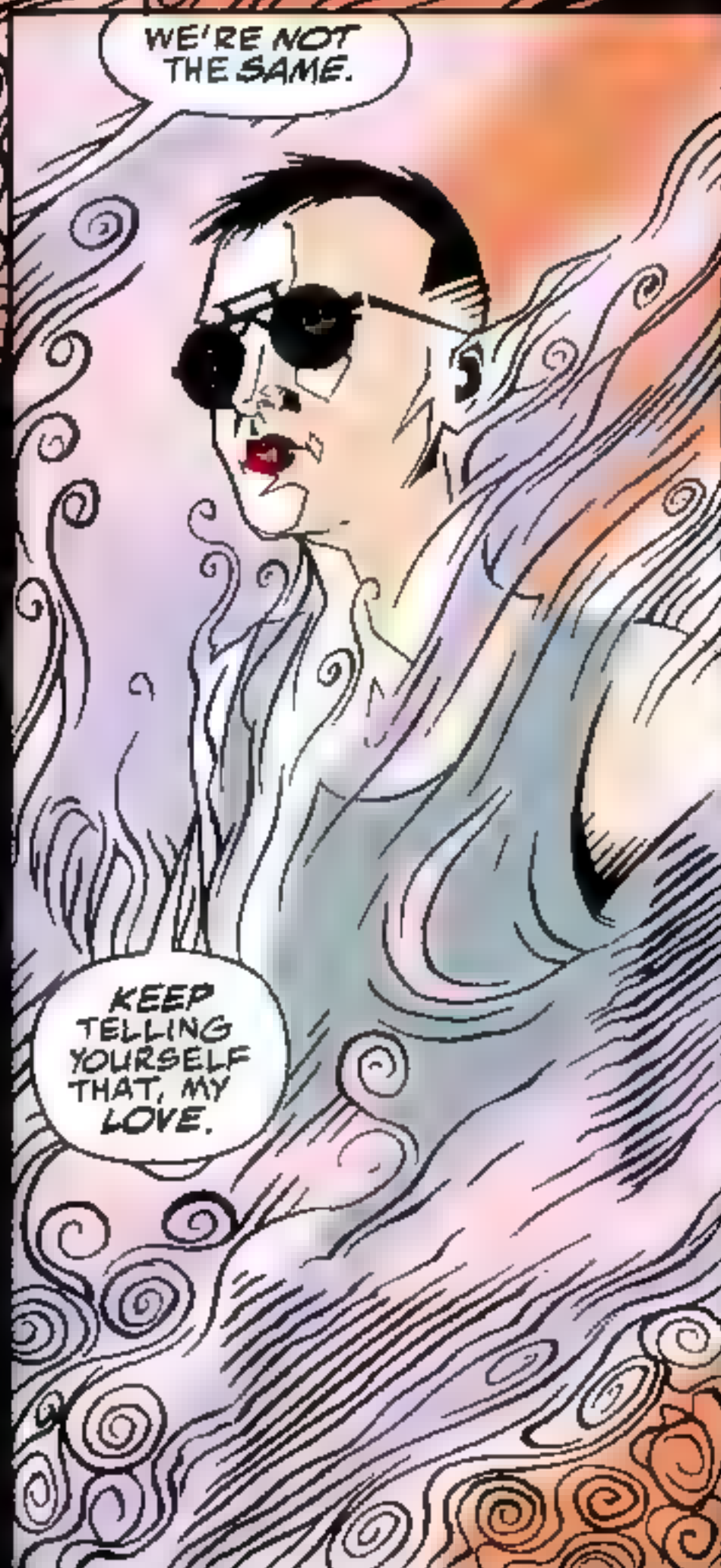
...AND I'LL  
BE THERE LOOK-  
ING BACK.





SO  
WHEN  
NEXT?

ELEVEN  
MONTHS.  
SEE YOU  
THEN.



WE'RE NOT  
THE SAME.

KEEP  
TELLING  
YOURSELF  
THAT, MY  
LOVE.



BUT YOU  
KNOW I'M  
RIGHT.







≡whew!≡





By 11:55 PM, most of the fires had ebbed. Most of the wounded have been treated. The dead have been counted. The living have whispered relieved survivors' prayers.

IT'S OVER.

12:00 AM ENTERS THE DRAMA LIKE AN UNDERSTUDY. A NEW DAY TAKES THE OPAL WITH A NERVOUS COUGH TO MARK ITS ENTRANCE, AND A NERVOUS GLANCE AT ITS FELLOW PLAYERS.

THESE PLAYERS, SCATTERED FAR--







ONE HASN'T LET  
HIS WIFE LEAVE  
HIS ARMS FOR  
AN HOUR.

NOR THE TASTE  
OF HER KISSES  
LEAVE HIS LIPS.




ONE SAW A  
VISION AND  
THE ERROR  
OF HIS WAYS.

BUT NOW SEES  
BAD TIMES  
COMING.







TWO DID THE IMPOSSIBLE  
AT 9:50 PM.

THEY  
SURVIVED.

ONE HAS EVEN LESS  
MEMORY NOW  
THAN BEFORE. AND  
YET... MORE  
MEMORY THAN  
EVER.

THE OTHER HAS ONE  
THOUGHT, PURE AND  
SIMPLE, AS ALL HIS  
THOUGHTS TEND TO  
BE. "THE BLUE MAN IS  
HIS FRIEND. HE SAVED  
HIM. AND NOW HE'LL  
DO ANYTHING FOR  
THE BLUE MAN'S  
GOOD."

"HE'LL DIE FOR  
HIM, IF HE MUST."



ONE  
LEAVES  
TOWN.

A SMILE ON  
HER LIPS.



ONE HATES.

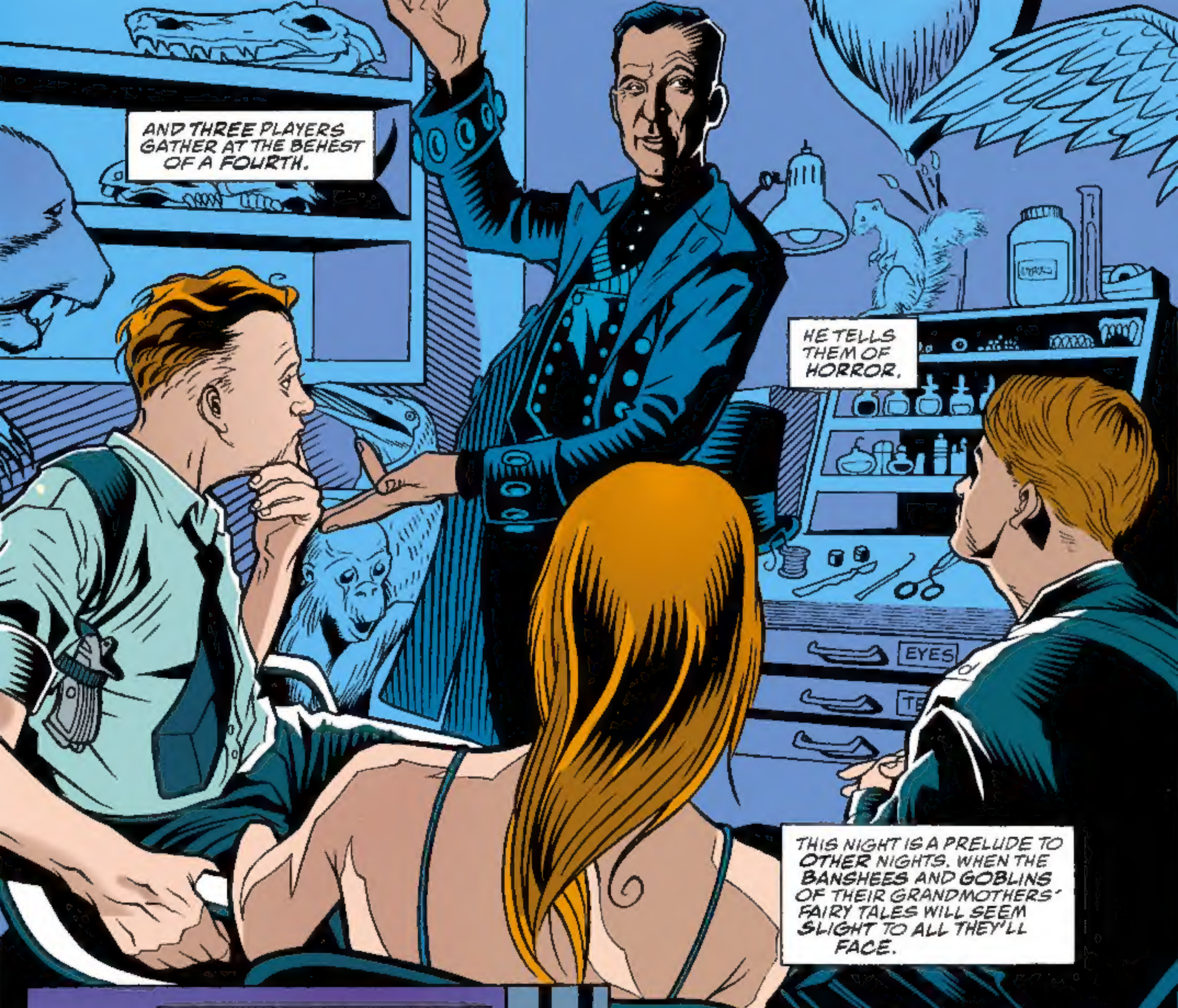
TWO MORE  
LEAVE.

FOR  
NOW.

OPAL TRAIN  
STATION

2-3A45





AND THREE PLAYERS  
GATHER AT THE BEHEST  
OF A FOURTH.

HE TELLS  
THEM OF  
HORROR.

THIS NIGHT IS A PRELUDE TO  
OTHER NIGHTS. WHEN THE  
BANSHEES AND GOBLINS  
OF THEIR GRANDMOTHERS'  
FAIRY TALES WILL SEEM  
SLIGHT TO ALL THEY'LL  
FACE.

THE OPAL'S LIGHTS SHINE NOW.  
FAMILIAR NIGHTTIME SOUNDS  
CAN AGAIN BE HEARD OVER  
SIRENS AND SCREAMS.

THE ANGRY BLARE OF  
TAXI HORNS. THE  
CRIES OF CATS AND  
CHILDREN. THE SPIT-  
TING HUM OF NEON.

AND AS CRAVEN  
AS THE NEW DAY  
SHUFFLES IN, IT'S  
DULY NOTED BY  
EACH AND ALL OF  
THESE SOULS.

ALL OF  
THEM.

WITH A SIGH OR A GRIN  
OR A SNEER OR A SOB  
OR BY LONG, DEEP, DARK  
TROUBLED THOUGHTS.



WE'RE NOT THE  
SAME, NASH.  
NO WAY.

ONE DAY, COW-  
GIRL. ONE DAY...

...I'LL PUT  
YOUR WORDS BETWEEN  
RYE BREAD AND SERVE  
THEM TO YOU.

ALL OF  
THEM.





AND JACK.

The End



# Deadman Wade

"THIS IS WHAT  
AWESOME  
LOOKS LIKE".

DCP